

refers to, but her study never manages to illustrate the complexity she alludes to or truly embrace the multidimensional messiness of Evers's history and memory. Until historians situate Evers more effectively in the drama of the civil rights movement, the "shadowy sun" that Bob Dylan sang about in "Only a Pawn in Their Game" will continue to set on a decade of change still shrouded in myth and misunderstanding. Regrettably, the shadows still greatly overpower the sunlight.

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Sharing the Prize: The Economics of the Civil Rights Revolution in the American South. By Gavin Wright. (Cambridge, Mass., and London: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2013. Pp. [xiv], 353. \$35.00, ISBN 978-0-674-04933-8.)

Stanford University economic historian Gavin Wright's clear, accessible, and deeply researched book argues persuasively, first, that it was civil rights laws and federal court decisions from *Brown v. Board of Education* (1954) on that substantially enhanced the economic well-being of southern blacks after 1960. These improvements in black status, he demonstrates with both statistical evidence and qualitative case studies, would not have come about through the operation of market forces alone. Strong legal pressure from outside the region was necessary to shock and awe Jim Crow. Second, his simple, informative graphs and tables show that African American improvement did not come at the expense of southern whites. The civil rights revolution was not a zero-sum game; unleashing black talent made everyone better off.

Consider the socioeconomic status and prospects of southern African Americans on the eve of *Brown* and the Montgomery bus boycott: While agricultural earnings for sharecroppers and wage laborers in the South seem to have been approximately equal for blacks and whites since Reconstruction, cotton cultivation was rapidly being mechanized in the 1950s, and the workforce was being laid off. As the southern economy modernized in the twentieth century, African Americans were excluded from decent jobs in whole industries, such as textiles, and the discrimination continued through the 1950s. White managers in companies large and small, national and regional, almost uniformly refused to hire black workers for skilled and managerial posts because they stereotyped blacks as incompetent. The frustrations of an economy in which blacks no longer had even a subordinate place drove many of the most ambitious and best-educated African Americans from the South.

The most dramatic evidence for Wright's contention that the civil rights revolution was also an economic revolution is that net black migration to the South, negative since 1890, turned positive after 1970 and, like white net migration to the region, has continued strongly positive ever since. African Americans moved to a South in which public accommodations were desegregated. Although the widespread and often lengthy sit-ins and boycotts produced only uneven desegregation, these actions built support among citizens and chain stores for Title II of the 1964 Civil Rights Act,

which compelled rapid regionwide compliance. Economic theory and rose-colored hindsight to the contrary, most white southern businessmen, before and often also after the wave of sit-ins, opposed desegregation because they feared alienating white customers with even token integration.

The same economic theory would predict a market-driven breakdown of employment discrimination, because calculating employers would realize that at least some black workers were superior to some white workers and hire the blacks. In fact, that did not happen in southern manufacturing until Title VII of the 1964 Civil Rights Act forced open white employers' prejudiced eyes. Then change erupted: black male employment in textiles, then the South's largest industry, jumped from 5 percent in 1964 to 25 percent by 1970. In other industries, change was not as immediate, but successful lawsuits and expanded power for the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission opened up more skilled and management positions for African Americans, and black income in the South rose substantially.

School desegregation is both the most visible symbol of the continuing civil rights struggle and the most difficult area to assess, partly because the major source of information, federal court cases, is episodic, making systematic generalizations difficult. Revenues per black student began to grow in the South in the 1930s and 1940s and to attain white levels in the 1950s, as the NAACP pushed action and white authorities tried to buy off blacks to keep them from demanding integration. While *Brown* brought an end to the absolute separation of blacks and whites in southern public schools, only about 2 percent of black students actually went to predominantly white schools by 1964.

The passage of the Civil Rights Act, with its Title VI threat to cut off federal funds for discriminatory governmental programs, in 1964, the considerable expansion of those programs in the Elementary and Secondary Education Act in 1965, the promulgation of strict integrationist guidelines by federal education authorities in 1967, and the adamant integrationist Supreme Court opinion in *Green v. New Kent County* in 1968 brought about massive desegregation in the South by 1972. After 1960, African American high school completion rates rose markedly, and after 1970, so did black test scores. Although conservative court reversals since 1974 have left this facet of the civil rights revolution far from finished, the benefits for both blacks and whites of the difficult struggle over schools have been palpable.

Black voter registration gradually increased after the Supreme Court outlawed the white primary in *Smith v. Allwright* in 1944 and mushroomed, even in the Deep South, after the passage of the Voting Rights Act in 1965. It took much longer and many battles in the federal courts and in Congress to elect substantial numbers of black officials, but African Americans are now closer to parity with whites in officeholding in the South than in any other region. Such officials brought more black public employment and public services to small towns and rural areas and notable economic development to cities like Birmingham and Atlanta, benefiting whites as well as blacks.

Wright's important book, which should be widely read, suggests that the judicial reversal of the civil rights revolution in schools and voting rights,

and perhaps soon in employment and housing, may stall its income and social gains as well.

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Dispossession: Discrimination against African American Farmers in the Age of Civil Rights. By Pete Daniel. (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2013. Pp. [xviii], 332. \$34.95, ISBN 978-1-4696-0201-1.)

In this study of the policies pursued by the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) in the civil rights era, Pete Daniel examines one of the paradoxes of the black freedom movement and its aftermath. Progress toward legal and political equality for African Americans in the 1960s and 1970s was accompanied by the economic marginalization of black workers as the modernization of southern agriculture pushed thousands of sharecroppers, tenants, and small farmers off the land. Daniel makes clear that this process was not simply the result of scientific and technological developments that lessened the need for cheap black labor. Racist administrators of federal farm programs actively encouraged the mass displacement of black farmers by withholding loans, subsidies, information, and other assistance.

The book focuses on three key USDA agencies whose influence over rural communities amounted to what one administrator called “a shadow government” (p. 3). The Agricultural Stabilization and Conservation Service determined the amount of acreage farmers could plant and dispensed millions of dollars in farm subsidies. The Federal Extension Service worked through the nation’s land-grant colleges to conduct research, experiment with new techniques, and advise farmers on the best ways to increase crop yields. The Farmers Home Administration (FmHA) offered low-interest loans for land purchases, equipment, and operating expenses. Historically, these agencies favored the interests of large landowners over small farmers and offered only limited, inferior service to rural black people compared with the benefits they showered on white Americans. When the civil rights movement forced the USDA to address its record of racial discrimination, administrators responded with rhetorical support for racial equality while pursuing a strategy of “passive nullification” that effectively neutralized antidiscrimination measures (p. 1).

Daniel faults officials at all levels of the USDA bureaucracy for failing to enforce civil rights laws. State and local administrators ignored directives to hire more African Americans and include them in programs, withheld information or disseminated misinformation, sabotaged farmers with delayed loans and bad advice, retaliated against black people who tried to assert their rights, and falsified compliance reports. In one instance, Extension Service staff claimed to have contacted 312,000 nonwhite farmers in the South, though census statistics listed only 200,000 nonwhite farmers in the region. Although federal administrators sometimes questioned such tactics, they lacked the enforcement power and political will needed to ensure equal treatment for African Americans. Daniel offers multiple examples illustrating the contempt with which agency staff viewed black farmers and poor people more generally. From the obvious racism expressed by Alabama FmHA